

REMARKS

Claims 2-6, 8-12, 14 and 15 are pending. Claims 1, 7 and 13 have been cancelled. Claims 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14 and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1, 6, 7, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Kuroshima (U.S. Patent No. 6,421,134 B1). This rejection is respectfully overcome by the foregoing amendments. Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

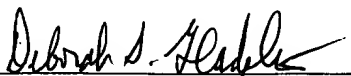
Claim 15 was rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuroshima as applied to claim 13, and in combination with Yamagami (U.S. Patent No. 5,745,251). This rejection is respectfully overcome by the foregoing amendments. Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 325772015900.

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Respectfully submitted,

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